

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant and Applicant's attorney express appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the recent interview held on March 16, 2004. Reconsideration and allowance for the above-identified application are now respectfully requested. Claims 1-18, 20-21 and 23-32 are pending, wherein claims 1, 2, 7-9, 17-18, 21 and 24-25 have been amended and claims 26-32 are new.

As set forth in the Interview Summary, the amendments that were proposed and discussed during the Examiner Interview overcome all previous rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Amended claim 1 is identical to the amendment as proposed and discussed during the Examiner Interview except that the limitation directed to the angled proximal end has been moved near the end of the claim. The limitation directed toward the angle of the proximal end should be understood to comprise the structure corresponding to the "angled face" discussed in the specification and recited previously in the claims. As such, the amendment to claim 1, as well as the amendments changing "face" to "proximal end" in claims 2, 7-9 and 18, do not narrow the scope of these claims.

New claims 26-32 have been added to claim additional embodiments disclosed in the application. The limitations found in these claims are derived from the already pending claims. New independent claim 29 is patentable over the art of record because none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, disclose an interference screw that includes a threaded proximal section of constant diameter, a threaded distal section of constant diameter, a threaded and tapered transition section, and a single continuous thread of uniform pitch. New dependent claims 26-28 and 30-32 further narrow the claims in a manner that further distinguishes over the cited art.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes that the claims are presently in allowable form. In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application, may be clarified through a telephone interview or that can be overcome by an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Dated this 19th day of March 2004.

Respectfully submitted,



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